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Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Miss. Baptist Youth Night set for July 19

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

A standing room only crowd is expected as the 2002 edition of the annual Mississippi Baptist Youth Night gets underway at 7 p.m. on July 19 at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson.

"Mississippi Baptist Youth Night is traditionally a special night of worship and celebration, as teenagers from all across the state fill the Coliseum to lift up the Lord and praise his Name.

"It is an event that God has used, year after year, to touch thousands of lives and turn hearts toward him," said Don Lum, chairman of the youth night planning committee and youth consultant in the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

The speaker for this year's event is David Nasser of David Nasser Outreach, Inc., of Birmingham. Music will be provided by Exit 10 of Cumming, Ga.

"David Nasser is a gifted

communicator with a passion for sharing God's gift of forgiveness and salvation with today's teens. Exit 10 is a praise/worship band that has worked extensively with Louie Giglio and the Passion Project.

"We feel blessed to have been led to these Godly people for our youth night program," Lum said.

Lum, who also heads the youth team in the MBCB church growth division, estimated that the 2002 youth night crowd will equal or exceed last year's attendance of over 9,000 people, when Rick Ousley of Birmingham preached and Michael John Clement provided the music.

Lum urged everyone planning to attend to arrive early enough to claim the non-reserved seats they want.

Jackson's High Street — the main entrance to Mississippi Coliseum — is undergoing major reconstruction and could present a serious gridlock problem for motorists arriving close to the event's start time, Lum said.

Alternate routes include



2001 Mississippi Baptist Youth Night

exiting Interstate 55 at Pearl Street (one exit south of High Street) to Jefferson Street, or Fortification Street (one exit north of High Street) to Jefferson Street.

Counselor training will begin at the Coliseum at 6:25 p.m., and the pre-session music celebration will kick off at 6:30 p.m.

No registration or tickets are required to attend, and there is

no admission charge. A love offering will be taken. Parking is free and security is provided. Buses and vans are welcome.

Mississippi Baptist Youth Night is a ministry of the Mississippi Cooperative Program. For more information, contact Lum at (601) 292-3280 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 280. E-mail: dlum@mbcb.org.

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WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

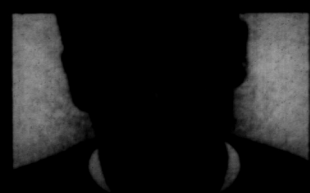
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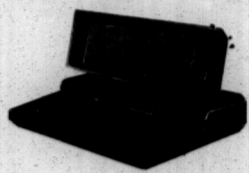
Baptist Children's Village

Mississippi Baptist
Youth Night 2002



Now
is the
Hour

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Dark Moon rising, again

The full-page ads have appeared recently in newspapers all over the country. Intriguingly entitled, *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Saints' Testimonies to the True Parents*, the five monotonous rows of small, gray text could easily be mistaken for the legal advertisements found farther back in most papers.

This was no legal ad, though. It was the latest treatise on the divinity of Sun Myung Moon, the elderly Korean holy man who for nearly 50 years has proclaimed himself to be the Second Coming — the Messiah chosen by God to save mankind after Jesus Christ failed to fulfill his mission.

You read right. The man known chiefly known for sending young people to stand on street corners with trinkets for sale and for blessing thousands of arranged marriages in sports arenas around the world, asserts that even Jesus acknowledges his spiritual supremacy as the True Parent of the human race (a title he shares with his current wife).

The ads — each costing many thousands of dollars — were placed by the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, a Moon front group being used as the new name for Moon's discredited Unification Church.

"What follows is a complex document. It was produced at a seminar in the spirit world for leaders of five of the great religions," the advertisement states. "The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification is publishing the document throughout America and in 40 countries worldwide. This proclamation is our responsibility to let all humankind know the works of God in our age," the advertisement states.

The document grows even more bizarre as Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha, various Hindu gods, and even communist dictator Josef Stalin bow before Sun Myung Moon.

"Reverend Sun Myung Moon! You are the Second Coming who inaugurated the Completed Testament Age!" Jesus says in the ad.

"I, Peter, representing the twelve disciples of Jesus, pledge to attend the Lord of the Second Coming, the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, as Messiah and Savior," says the Apostle Peter.

"I, Paul, pledge to believe and attend the Lord of the Second Coming, the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, Savior and True Parent, with the fire I felt when I met the resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus," says the Apostle Paul.

The ad closes with a letter from God which states, "You, the True Parents, have now succeeded in everything and have raised everything to its true level. So you are now Savior, Messiah, and King of Kings."

It would be easy for those of us steeped in Christian doctrine to dismiss the advertisement's inscrutable ramblings as inconsequential, amusing, or at worst blasphemous.

It would be easy to do so, but there are too many lost and spiritually-confused people in the world who might see Moon and others like him as their pathway to spiritual peace, belonging, and God. We shouldn't forget the many thousands of people who have already been led astray by this man.

Moon has been to Mississippi. He has preached to a standing-room-only crowd



Sun Myung Moon in Jackson on March 17, 2001

in one of the largest banquet halls in the state, and he garnered standing ovations for his two-and-a-half hour sermon that included crude sexual references and odes to himself.

He has plans for Mississippi. He has plans for America. He has plans for the world. He even has plans for Southern Baptists. It's up to us to see that those plans never materialize.

How can be do that? By being salt and light to a lost world, including Moon's followers. By being prayer warriors for those who have been led astray. By witnessing in love through both word and lifestyle that we believe Jesus Christ is the God-sent Messiah and Savior of the World, Sun Myung Moon notwithstanding.

In other words, by being the Christians we ought to be (Matt. 28:18-20).

GUEST OPINION:

Why support BSU?

By Jim Ray, pastor
Bunker Hill Church, Columbia



Why does Bunker Hill Baptist Church support Baptist Student Union (BSU) work? Well, I'm glad you asked.

The BSU is really a mission organization whose setting is in the midst of a large mission field. College campuses house a conglomeration of students as diverse as the world itself. Thousands of students equal thousands of prospects — prospects ripe for evangelization.

BSU students are making a difference. They lead campus Bible studies. They witness to those students that are lost and need to know about the love of Christ. They raise monies that they themselves might go to other areas and serve the Lord in mission enterprises.

The work is a microcosm of our Lord's command to go to the remotest parts of the earth telling of his unyielding love. It is truly an awesome experience to visit a BSU and see firsthand the work that is being accomplished.

The BSU students are gaining hands on experience serving our Lord. They are not simply learning about service they are doing service. They are growing in the Lord. Some will become missionaries. Some will preach the gospel. Some

will serve in staff positions in local churches.

I believe the greatest asset to the churches will be when these young men and women graduate from college and find their way back into the local church as lay leaders. The local church is greatly strengthened because of BSU work.

The BSU has many strengths but two that stand out are leadership development and mission emphasis. My personal contact with the BSU at the University of Southern Mississippi at Hattiesburg has allowed me to witness first hand the training of our future church leaders, preparing them for a life of commitment to missions.

In the past two years, I have witnessed more than 100 students involved in Impact Northeast from the BSU located at the University of Southern

Mississippi. In a recent commissioning service I was privileged to see the commissioning of 40 new leaders for a new year of campus service, 15 summer missionaries and a 16 member team sent out to work with two USM journeymen to Burkina Faso, West Africa.

Our BSU's are not just taking mission trips, they are giving students challenging experiences that call them to a lifestyle of mission commitment.

Another focus of the BSU on our major university campuses is reaching international students. The BSU is surrounded by a mission field of international students. As students reach out to these internationals, they continue to build vital bridges of understanding that allows the sharing of the love of Jesus Christ and the good news of salvation through faith in him.

The world has come to us and we have the opportunity to send Christians all over the world as these internationals return home with their faith in Christ. The global perspective that the BSU students gain regarding global missions is priceless.

It goes without saying, mission-minded churches are blessed of God. We, at Bunker Hill Baptist Church, have learned that you cannot out give God. The more you give to missions the greater the blessings. Missions are primary and the BSU is a part of our mission giving.

The BSU needs the support of every church in Mississippi. A common misconception is that the BSU is supported by Cooperative Program dollars. The BSU staff are supported by cooperative program dollars, but the monies to support the actual work of the BSU must be raised. The students themselves raise a large percentage of the monies. However, the work would suffer if it were not for the support of the local church. The problem — not many local churches support the BSU. Let me encourage you to put the BSU in your budget. God will bless your church.

Remember, you cannot out give God.

Southern Baptists dig deep for Lottie Moon

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) -- In spite of economic turmoil and massive donations to help victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Southern Baptists increased their gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions (LMCO) by \$532,804 in 2001.

Missions leaders expressed heartfelt appreciation for the commitment Southern Baptists continue to show for the challenge of bringing all the world's people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

"We are grateful that God continues to prove his faithfulness through the generosity of Southern Baptists," said Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). "In spite of economic challenge, Southern Baptist churches have reflected their heart for missions and commitment for fulfilling the Great Commission."

"Southern Baptists always respond to a Great Commission challenge," said Wanda Lee, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union (WMU). Lee's organization is an auxiliary to the SBC.

"We are pleased with the response to the 2001 LMCO in light of all that has happened since Sept. 11," Lee said. "When giving to other charitable causes and worthy ministries was down, giving to missions remained a priority

among our churches.

"These results reinforce the truth that when our focus in the



EVANGELIZING THE WORLD — Southern Baptists gave \$113.7 million to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions to support the work of Debbie Marshall (above) an International Mission Board (IMB) missionary associate in southern Sudan, and nearly 5,300 other international missionaries. (BP photo)

local church is centered on God's call to share the gospel with a lost world, our members respond through committed praying and sacrificial giving. WMU continues to challenge the church to radical involvement in missions through both of these avenues."

The \$113,707,996 given by the churches was the largest international missions offering ever, said David Steverson, the International Mission Board's vice president for finance. Though it fell short of the \$120 million goal, the offering marked a 47% increase over 2000.

"While this increase is the smallest in recent years, we are overjoyed, considering all the events of this past year," Steverson said. "After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the American economy and stock market really struggled in the fourth quarter of 2001.

"Americans gave the Red Cross almost \$1 billion during that period. All that, while Southern Baptists were being asked to step up to the greatest challenge in missions giving they had ever faced.

"Many nonprofit organizations saw their incomes fall significantly this past year. We rejoice that the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is not only up, but the IMB's total income also continues to be fairly steady."

The agency had budgeted the entire \$120 million goal for 2002, Steverson noted. The board now will drop the \$3 million capital needs portion of that budget and find ways to offset the remaining \$3.3 million planned for its overseas operating budget.

Unlike many other denominational missions agencies, the IMB is faced with the challenge of raising financial support for a rapidly increasing missionary force, Steverson said. While other such agencies have seen overseas personnel numbers declining, Southern Baptists are posting larger numbers of new missionaries each year.

In 2001, the IMB passed the 5,000 mark for overseas workers serving two years or longer and now is nudging the 5,300 mark, he said.

The agency is on a track to reach the 8,000 level by 2010.

The cost of supporting a rapidly growing missionary force is outstripping growth in financial support, Steverson said.

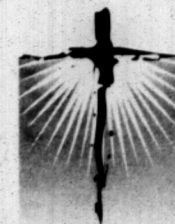
IMB budgets are always balanced and based strictly on

receipts through the SBC's Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and smaller amounts of miscellaneous income, he said. Those income sources, however, are not growing at as fast a rate as the cost of supporting a growing overseas workforce.

Steverson is confident in God's sovereignty.

"I am convinced God has a reason why he is choosing to grow the IMB in such a marvelous way," he said. "And I am convinced he will provide the resources needed to support the rapid rise in the number of missionaries being sent out."

For his part, native Mississippian Rankin knows Southern Baptists will respond to God's call to give as readily as they are responding to his call to go.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST
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"It would be tragic if we ever had to cut back on the flow of God-called missionaries being appointed to carry the gospel literally to the ends of the earth," he said. "I am confident that Southern Baptists will make whatever sacrifice is necessary to keep missions the priority and provide the resources to enable us to be obedient to the unprecedented opportunities for outreach and harvest around the world today."

Every dollar given to the Lottie Moon offering is used exclusively for missionaries and their ministries. None of it is spent for stateside administration or promotion.

Southern Baptists gave almost \$113.2 million to the Lottie Moon offering in 2000. That represented an \$8 million (7.3%) increase and the second-largest dollar increase since the offering's inception in 1888.

For Christmas 2002, WMU and the International Mission Board have set a \$125 million goal for the offering.

Looking back

10 years ago

Harold E. Fisher Jr. of Jackson is elected executive secretary of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation during a called meeting of the organization's board of trustees at the Baptist Building in Jackson. The Blue Mountain native will replace Aubrey Boone, who is retiring.

20 years ago

First Church, Winona, calls Jerry W. Mixon as pastor. Mixon previously served at pastor of Goss Church near Columbia. He is a graduate of William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary. (Editor's note: Mixon currently serves as director of stewardship & Cooperative Program promotion for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.)

50 years ago

Pearl River Association completes a county-wide youth revival, held at the Picayune High School Stadium. 2,800 people packed the stadium the last night of the revival, with 243 decisions for Christ recorded.

Prayer list released

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — New Tribes Mission (NTM), the non-Southern Baptist missionary agency that trained Martin and Gracia Burnham at their Durant facility before sending them to the Philippines, is circulating a list of prayer requests for Gracia as she adjusts to life without her husband. Gracia 43, and her husband Martin, 42, were kidnapped on May 27, 2001, as they were celebrating their 18th wedding anniversary at a resort. After being held captive by Muslim terrorist rebels for more than a year, Martin was killed and Gracia was shot in the leg during a June 7 rescue attempt by the Philippine military. Gracia has since been reunited with her young children in the U.S. The prayer requests, as listed by NTM, include:

- Where to settle. Resolving this question will greatly help with emotional healing.
- Finances. Gracia is now responsible for the decisions she and Martin used to share.
- Telling the story. What is the best way for Gracia to relate the story of God's faithfulness? Opportunities abound.
- Gracia's health. Her leg wound is slow to heal; pray that it will mend completely. Pray that she will take time to rest and recuperate. Pray too for emotional healing for her and her children.
- For Gracia to continue to have boldness and clarity in testifying to God's faithfulness.
- Gracia's parents, Norvin and Betty Jo Jones, and Martin's parents, Paul and Oreta Burnham. Pray also for the family of Deborah Yap, the Brunham's slain co-hostage.

Award winners announced at workshop

JACKSON, MS (Special) — "Every time you do a Christian show, you plant a seed," said Maggie Wade, co-anchor of the top-rated 6 p.m. daily newscast on WLBT-TV in Jackson, at the annual Witnessing Through Media workshop in early May at Colonial Heights Church in Jackson.



ANCHOR SPEAKS — Maggie Wade (right), a Mississippi College graduate and co-anchor of the top rated 6 p.m. daily newscast on WLBT-TV in Jackson, served as the keynote speaker at the awards banquet of the Witnessing Through Media Workshop at Colonial Heights Church, Jackson. Welcoming Wade and serving as awards presenter was Chip Turner, vice-president for marketing at FamilyNet, a broadcast ministry of the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. (BR photo by Tim Nicholas)

Wade, a graduate of Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton, was the keynote speaker at the workshop's awards banquet. She described her experiences as a Christian broadcaster in a career field that is seen by many critics as non-Christian and sometimes even hostile to the faith.

Wade chided American television executives who have "managed to let the devil take over," and added, "too

many of us are complacent" about spreading the Word of God to lost people.

Wade was recently honored by the U.S. Congress for her contributions to the long-running WLBT-TV adoption campaign named, Wednesday's Child. More than 1,000 children have been adopted as a result of the weekly feature, broadcast during the prime time local news slot.

In reference to her dedication to the Wednesday's Child campaign, she said, "Every single day of my life I heard the words, 'I love you.' What do we tell our children today?"

Workshop sessions included hands-on training with cameras, sound equipment, and web site design. Awards were announced for television and radio excellence. Winners

included (right photo, back row from left):

- Scott Voge, ACTS of Laurel and First Church, Laurel: Best TV program/community service for 2001 Christmas Parade,

- Dennis Hayward, minister of music at Broadmoor Church, Madison: Best TV program/church musical for Light of the World.

- Kenny Husband, ACTS of Laurel and First Church, Laurel: Best TV program/community service for Christmas Parade 2001.

- Levon Gray, minister of music at First Church, McComb: Best TV program/community service for Fulfilling the Dream.

- Mona Faith of Faith for Living with Mona Faith Radio Ministries in Canton: Best radio program/community service for Faith for Living with Mona Faith - Program 104.

- Jeff Sneed, media associate at First Church, Hattiesburg: Best TV program/missions-evangelism for College Mexico Mission Trip.

In addition, awards were presented to (right photo, front row from left):

- Rusty Holcomb, media director at Christ United Methodist Church in Jackson: Best radio spot for Around the Throne - Easter Spot 2001.

- Donald Lowery, media chairman at Main Street Church, Hattiesburg: Creative use of media for The Home of the Brave.

- Larry Kulcke, minister of music at Colonial Heights Church, Jackson: Certificate of recognition for media work.

- John Padgett, media director at First Church, Hattiesburg: Best use of web site for www.tpw-go.com.

Not present to accept their awards were:

- LaRue Stephens of First



Witnessing Through Media Workshop Award Winners

Church, Long Beach: Best first time entry for Long Beach - Ministering to Your Family.

- Thomas Broadhead of Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian: Best TV spot for Christmas 2001.

- Leon Bedsole of First Church, Biloxi: Best TV program/church musical for Singing Christmas Tree.

- Bryan Horn of First Church, Booneville: Certificate of recognition for media work.

The Witnessing Through Media workshop is a ministry of the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

For more information on the workshop, contact Ian Richardson, director of communication services for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3290 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 290. E-mail: irichardson@mbcb.org.

Patterson Place debt-free

CLINTON, Miss. (Special) — Patterson Place, the \$1.8 million retreat and lodge facility for adults at Camp Garaywa in Clinton, became debt-free in April, said Kay Cassibry, executive director-treasurer of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU).

The dream that became Patterson Place grew out of a long-range planning committee that began working in 1991 to determine the need for adult ministry lodging and facilities. In 1996, a feasibility and development committee was appointed at the WMU annual meeting and initiated the fund-raising and construction processes. The committee was headed by Dell Scoper of Laurel and Lydia Jones of Hazlehurst.

Promotion of the facility took place all year long in 1996, and in November the committee engaged the services of the stewardship department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

"We were amazed at the support we got from around the state," said Cassibry. "David Michel (then director of the stewardship department, now MBCB associate executive director for missions strategy) helped us reach donors. Lay leadership, associational WMU directors, and so many others helped. It was a real encouragement to see how so many churches and associations put the project in their budgets."

Patterson Place is named for Marjean Patterson, who retired as Mississippi's WMU director in 1998 after 41 years in the department.

Miss. CP falls in June

Mississippi Baptists gave \$2,043,713 in the month of June to the work of the Lord through the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP), according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the CP funds. The June total was 21.06% below the previous month's total of \$2,588,991, and 20.15% below the \$2,559,403 given in June 2001. Giving is up 1.28% over the same January-June period last year, buoyed by an all-time CP giving record in January of \$3,389,338. February and March fell below the \$2,543,558 needed each month to meet the record 2002 budget of \$30,522,692, set by messengers to the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, but the January, April, and May totals kept CP on track. However, the June total was \$499,845 less than the monthly requirement and puts CP at only 1.68% above budget. Mississippi CP helps fund such programs as Super Summer July 15-19 at Mississippi College in Clinton; Lad/Dad Weekend Camp July 19-20 at Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko; and CentriKid camp July 18-20 at Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian.

SBC CP down for June

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) in June were 5.94% below gifts for June 2001, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman. Year-to-date support for CP Missions, meanwhile, now stands at 3.92% ahead of totals of the same point last year. June's \$14,712,972.46 in CP gifts to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America compared to \$15,642,033.39 in June 2001, a difference of \$929,060.93. Designated gifts of \$14,494,864.70 in June, meanwhile, were 33.07% below June 2001's \$21,657,483.42, a decrease of \$7,162,618.72. In year-to-date CP giving, \$138,449,766.31 has been received, compared with \$133,222,622.70 in 2000-01, an increase of 3.92% or \$5,227,143.61. The SBC operates on an Oct. 1-Sept. 30 fiscal year. In year-to-date designated giving, \$157,613,650.57 has been received, compared with \$153,407,598.02 in 2000-01, an increase of 2.74% or \$4,206,052.55. For the SBC CP Allocation Budget, the June receipts of \$14,712,972.46 were 99.02% of the budgeted \$14,858,239.92, or \$145,267.46 under the budget goal.

NO MORE!

On June 26, 2002, an atheist flew an explosive missile into the Pledge of Allegiance of the United States. In an effort to protect his daughter from having to hear students in a classroom say "under God," this atheist took the issue to court and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Pledge of Allegiance, including "under God," was unconstitutional. God help us!

From Congress to the coffee shop and from the White House to the poor house, citizens expressed outrage - and rightly so! For me, I will be pushed no further! I have spoken out on issues and tried to stop the implementation of wrong both in the state and nationally, yet still our country has moved down-ward, wrong-ward, and Godless-ward. For example:

- In the name of liberty, we took all liberty away from voiceless little children in the wombs of their mothers.

- In the name of freedom, our state asked the citizens to vote on whether or not they wanted to sell beer and liquor to everyone. (Of course, the proceeds would provide more money than education would ever need and would all be kept under control by strict regulations. Still, as of today, teenagers are able to get this legal drug and adults on the road abuse the rest of the pop-



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

ulace by drinking and aiming their deadly vehicles toward others.)

- I oppose the industry that would come into Mississippi and rob from our citizens in order to build well-lit entertainment centers that impoverish our people in order to promote their own greed.

There are other issues that I won't expound on at this point, but I am here to tell you that I for one will live and die saying the Pledge of Allegiance with reinforced enthusiasm as I say "under God." I will teach my grandchildren to say "under God" with passion and inclusiveness. I will refuse to ever be a part of a religious, civil, private, or public ceremony that excludes "under God."

Regardless of what the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals did or what the Supreme Court may decide, I have already decided! I have decided that this great nation that was founded on Godly principles and guided through peaceful prosperity and painful wartimes by God, will continue

to have one voice — mine — acknowledging his care for us!

The man who brought the suit actually began with the intention of having "in God we trust" removed from our money — every coin and every dollar. Instead, he found it easier to attack the Pledge. He intends, at some point, to attempt again having "in God we trust" taken off our currency.

No sir, we have gone far enough! One person who chooses to choose the god of atheism does not have the right to change the fundamental pilings upon which our country is built nor rob our citizens of understanding today or irradiate from the future the reality that God Almighty has blessed us and enabled us to bless the world because of his love and providence! He can be thankful he lives in a free country where a person can believe or not believe as he so chooses, but I will NOT pledge...one nation, without God...

They ruled the nativity scenes off the grounds of the courthouses.

They declared prayer could not come into the schools.

They tried to make it impossible to discuss the Lord in the workplace.

They have quietly, but methodically, removed the intervention of God in our national history from the history books.

This is the last straw! On Thursday morning after the ruling on Wednesday, I arrived at work with the Declaration of Independence under my arm. I placed it in the lobby of the Baptist Building with my handwritten note, "Required Reading."

On July 4, 1776, in the midst of the third session of the Continental Congress, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia proposed, and John Adams seconded, a resolution be drawn declaring the United Colonies are free and independent states. The document, whose chief architect is generally believed to be Thomas Jefferson, was adopted.

The Declaration of Independence is 1,321 words in length. The average reader can cover it in about eight minutes. God is mentioned two times in the opening, two times at the end, and depended upon throughout. This single document, declaring who we are and what we will become, is a God-guided, God-centered document.

He deserves to be there and he deserves to be in the Pledge we give to our country!

Texas floods activate disaster relief

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP) — Flooding in Texas caused by as much as 30 inches of rainfall has activated seven Southern Baptist Disaster Relief units affiliated with Texas Baptist Men. Five of the units have been deployed in south-central Texas, where 13 counties have been declared as federal disaster areas by President George W. Bush. Two other units have been activated after flooding in West Texas, and Texas Baptist Men's two remaining units are on standby.

At least eight people have been killed and 48,000 homes have been affected by flooding from downpours in Texas since July 1, according to Associated Press reports on July 8. Various rivers have crested as high as 28 feet above flood level, the AP also noted.

Disaster relief units have prepared about 10,000 meals since the first units were deployed July 3, primarily for evacuees in shelters and for distribution by the American Red Cross. The meal count is expected to rise significantly in coming days.

No Mississippi Baptist disaster relief units have been activated as of printing deadline on July 9.

Golden Central Church adapts to community

By: Tony Martin

Associate Editor

A paraphrase of Luke 5:4 might read, "Go out where it is deeper and let down your nets and you will catch a lot of fish."

For the pastor and congregation of Golden Central Church in Golden, this verse has taken on special significance.

In April, pastor Mickey Trammel and the church planned for a revival/crusade that would take place in their community.

Using Luke 5:4 as a theme verse, Trammel told his congregation, "We have to get out there where the fish are. There are people in the deep places of life. In order to reach them we are going to have to launch out into the deep."

The people to which Trammel was referring is the Hispanic population, which local officials estimate is 15-20% of Golden's current population.

Trammel invited evangelist Homer Martinez of Dallas to preach the revival. The meeting began on a Saturday evening with a "fiesta," complete with Spanish music and Martinez preaching in Spanish. Ten Hispanics were saved that evening.

The Wednesday evening service was bilingual and twenty more Hispanics were saved. A total of 35 were saved during the five-day services.

During the week, Martinez and Trammel visited many Hispanic homes and found the people warm and receptive.

Kay Brown, an International Mission Board missionary serving in Columbia, helped with follow-up and discipling. Since then, Trammel and two Hispanic teenagers have tried to continue the discipling process but, as Trammel admits, "the follow-up has not been an easy task."

According to Trammel, the lack of bilingual ministers to reach Hispanics in Mississippi is of great concern to him and the members of Golden Central Church.

"It is frustrating that the Hispanics in our area are without a pastor. We are praying diligently that the Lord will bring someone to our area soon. In the meantime, we are trying our best to reach them with our limited resources," he said.

Meanwhile, many of the laypeople of Golden Central Church have developed ministries of their own.

Randy Sparks owns Silver Dollar Sales, Inc., in Golden. Silver Dollar Sales is a discount grocery and distribution company. What sets this company, and Sparks, apart is what happens each Monday morning.

"Customers know that at 8 o'clock each Monday we turn off the phones, because that's our time for Bible study," he said.

Sparks, who became a Christian in September 1993, began the weekly Bible study for his employees the next month and has been continuing the ministry ever since.

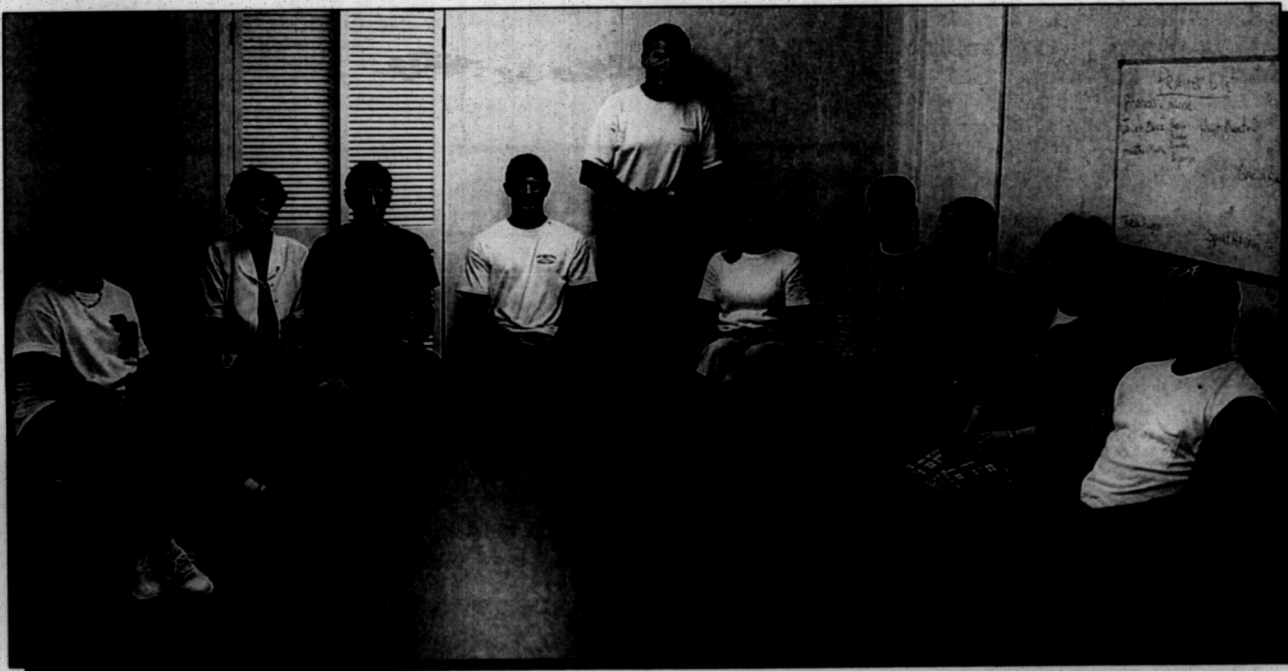
Attendance is not mandatory, but "80% of my employees come, plus any customers who want to drop in," stated Sparks.

Other businesses have learned of Sparks' ministry and followed suit.

"There's a business in Corinth that is doing much the same thing we are," said Sparks, "and I'm also aware of a mattress factory in Tennessee having Bible studies. Nobody can know the peace of God without Christ in their hearts."

Golden Central Church has learned to adapt to their community — not the reverse.

Trammel said, "There is not one verse of Scripture that commands the lost to come to church; there are many that command the church to go to the lost. Our church has accepted the challenge to do just that."



CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER — Randy Sparks (standing) meets with several of the employees of Silver Dollar Sales, Inc., in Golden. Sparks began a weekly Bible study at his business over eight years ago to help participants care for one another. (BR photo by Tony Martin)

Revival Dates

Friendship, McComb: July 12-14; Friday and Saturday, 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Tommy Mitchell, Gulfport, evangelist; Steve Bishop, McComb, music; LaVerne Summerlin, pastor.

Damascus, Flora: July 14-17; Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., meal in fellowship hall, and worship, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Norris Ables, Liberty Church, Raleigh, evangelist; Bill and Martha Martin, Oak Grove Church, Yazoo Association, music.

Jericho, Union Co.: July 21-24; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Glen Reeder, evangelist; Ron Norville, music.

Thompson, Smithdale: July 28-31; Sunday, 11 a.m.; and dinner on the grounds; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Nathan Cothen, former pastor, guest speaker; Ed May, McComb, worship leader; Robbie Speights, pastor.

Eastfork, Liberty: July 28-Aug. 2; J. Garland McKee, evangelist; Philip Alford, music; Paul G. Cain, pastor.

Mt. Vernon, Newton: July 21-25; 7 p.m. nightly; Jimmy Geiger, Laurel, evangelist; Jerry Murphy, Meridian, music; Steve Pouncey, pastor.

New Salem (Franklin): July 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m., noon meal, and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Wayne Moak, speaker; Delton Holland and Lynn Chapman, music; N. F. Greer, pastor.

Mission Hill, Wesson: July 16-19; 7 p.m. nightly; Jimmy Porter, evangelist; Tommy Purvis, pastor.

Enon, Louisville: July 14-17; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; David Keen, evangelist; Charles Rook, pastor.

First, Polkville: July 14-19; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Dale Authement, Jayess, evangelist; Tal Varderman, Morton, music; Max Price, pastor.

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FIBERGLASS SPECIALTIES INCORPORATED

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Edward P. Burk, 85, of San Angelo, Texas, died June 12. He previously served as associational missionary to Carroll/Montgomery counties and the Riverside Association in Cohoma and Tunica counties in North Mississippi. He also served as pastor to churches in Texas and Louisiana. Survivors include sons, Porter A. Burke of Wiggins, John T. Burke of Greenville, and Robert E. Burke

of Yates Center, Kan; daughters, Mary Elizabeth Latham and Alice Deneise Woolsey, both of San Angelo; sisters, Kathleen Kufhal of Buellton, Calif., and Alice Ruth Millican of Decatur, Texas; nine grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Jimmy Gardner, chairman of the deacons, Lynn Ray Road Church, Lebanon Association, is pictured congratulating **Al Blackmon** following his ordination service. Cecil Walters preached the ordination sermon.



Gardner and Blackmon

Ebenezer Church, Liberty, ordained Marty LeBlanc and Paul McLin as deacons on May 19. Pictured are LeBlanc and McLin with Charles Kirkfield (center), interim pastor.

Rickey Jones (left) of Nettleton, Monroe Association, was recently licensed by



LeBlanc, Kirkfield, and McLin



Jones and Rutledge

Antioch Church, Itawamba Association. Jones, currently attending Andersonville Theological Seminary, Camilla, Ga., is available for supply and can be contacted at (662) 963-0019 or 963-2863. Pictured with Jones is James Rutledge, pastor.

Brown Renfro (right) recently received the status of deacon emeritus at a recognition ceremony at Farmhaven Church, Madison County. Presenting the certificate is Charles Gentry, pastor.



Gentry and Renfro



Visit the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
on the World Wide Web at:
www.mbc.org



Homecomings

Goodwater, Raleigh: July 14; 11 a.m.; noon meal in fellowship hall; cemetery meeting at 1:30 p.m.; John Adcock, Raleigh, guest speaker; Robin Brumfield, pastor.

Crooked Creek, Silver Creek: Aug. 4; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; service, 11 a.m.; cov-

ered dish meal in fellowship hall; Robert Dunn, guest speaker; New Life Quartet, special music; Jimmy Jones, pastor.

Mission Hill, Wesson: July 21; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 10:40 a.m.; lunch to follow morning worship; Tommy Purvis, pastor.

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January Bible Study Preview Clinics 2002

"Helping Your Church Stay on Course: Studies in I Corinthians"

Conference Leader:
Dr. Gene Henderson
Pastor, FBC, Brandon

Locations:

September 23 - Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain
September 24 - Delta State BSU, Cleveland
September 25 - Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Jackson
September 26 - William Carey College, Hattiesburg

Conference Times (all locations):

9 - 9:30 a.m. - Registration/Refreshments
9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. - Conference - lunch is provided

Sponsored by: Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
Sunday School Department, PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205
(601) 986-3800 or (800) 748-1651

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

July 11, 2002

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.



T.W. Hunt

2003 BAPTIST DOCTRINE STUDY PREVIEWS

Doctrine of Prayer

with
T.W. Hunt

Make your plans now!

Attend a preview of the
2003 Baptist Doctrine Study
at one of the following locations:

- FBC, McComb, January 20, 2003
- FBC, Richland, January 21, 2003
- FBC, Oxford, January 23, 2003

*Preregistration is requested. All previews are from
9 a.m.-noon. The cost is \$10, which includes brunch
and a copy of the study course book.*

PREREGISTRATION FORM

Doctrine of Prayer Preview

Name _____
Phone Number _____
Church _____
Association _____
Address _____
\$10 x no. of persons = \$_____ (total amount)

Include names of others in your group on a separate sheet.

Circle choice of preview location

- First Baptist Church, McComb, January 20, 2003
- First Baptist Church, Richland, January 21, 2003
- First Baptist Church, Oxford, January 23, 2003

Make all checks payable to: Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

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MBCB Discipleship and Family Ministry
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Jackson MS 39205-0530

Church Leadership Training



August 9-10, Camp Garaywa

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Ends 1 p.m. Saturday

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Name _____ Phone _____
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Association/County _____ Church _____

PATTERSON PLACE LODGE: Check number per room (queen, double rooms)
(list roommates' names below) _____ x \$14 = _____

2 @ \$30 per person _____

3 @ \$25 per person _____

4 @ \$20 per person _____

GUEST HOUSE: \$14 per person (similar to open dormitory - attach a list of names)
_____ x \$14 = _____

CABINS: \$8 per person (bring own linens)
_____ x \$8 = _____

MEALS: (with or without lodging at Garaywa)

_____ @ \$7 Dinner (each) \$ _____

_____ @ \$5 Breakfast (each) \$ _____

_____ @ \$6 Lunch (each) \$ _____

Total Meals = \$ _____

Total PP. lodging enclosed: \$ _____ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS JULY 31, 2002

MAIL TO: WMU - CLT, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205-0530

For more information call 601-292-3316 or 1-800-748-1651, ext. 316

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Camp Garaywa, Clinton

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- SkillShop topics offered this year by Nancy Finn:

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Sponsored by Pastor/Leadership Development Department, formerly Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries



Growing in God's Spirit

2002

Preschool/Children's Choir Leadership Training

Saturday, August 17
FBC, Hattiesburg
9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Preschool - Barry Tweedy
Hernando BC, Hernando
Minister of Music
Younger Children - Katrina Marler
Daniel Memorial BC
Jackson
Older Children - Bill Barnes
Macedonia BC
Mendenhall
1-6 Grades - Gloria Barnes
Macedonia BC
Mendenhall

Saturday, August 24
FBC, Madison
9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Preschool - Lida Stark
Northside BC, Clinton
Younger Children - Pam Meadows
FBC, Clinton
Older Children - Charlotte McElroy
Calvary BC, Tupelo
1-6 Grades - Gloria Barnes
Macedonia BC
Mendenhall

Saturday, August 24
Harrisburg BC, Tupelo
9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Preschool - Debbie Wren
Oak Forest BC, Jackson
Younger Children - Sarah Talley
Church Music Department
MBCB, Jackson
Older Children - Tommy Gillon
Longview Heights BC
Olive Branch
1-6 Grades - Keith Stevens
FBC, Water Valley

Registration:

9-9:30 a.m.

Conference:

9:30 a.m. -

12:30 p.m.

**No preregistration
required**

Cost: \$5 per person

*Featuring the fall grad-
ed choir literature.*

*All directors and
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aged to attend.*

For more information,
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Department

1 (800) 748-1651 or
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HANDBELL SKILLS CLINIC

**Friday, August 9, 7-9 p.m. –
Saturday, August 10, 8:30 a.m.-noon
First Baptist Church, Canton
For Ringers and Directors**

This clinic is designed to assist handbell choirs in basic, intermediate, and advanced skills in ringing. You may bring all of your choir or a single ringer. Ringers will be taught skills relating to their bell assignments. Handbell ringers need to bring enough handbells, pads and tables to cover their assignments (see bell assignments below).

BUILDING HANDBELL SKILLS FOR YOUR RINGERS

- Ringing the bass bells
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- Four/in hand for upper bells
- The Shake, Brush Damp, Ring Touch, and Echo Ring
- Stopped bells skills: Mallets, Martellato, Thumb Damp, and Plucking
- Beginning and advanced conducting

Bring your ringers to this two-day skills clinic and get your handbell choir off to a great start this fall.

The cost is \$2 per person.

REGISTRATION

Church _____

Association _____

Number of ringers attending _____

Number of octaves used _____

Bell assignments for each ringer attending

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Make check payable to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Mail check and registration to the Church Music Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

Sunday School Directors Discipleship Training Directors Dinner and Workshop

*From the Basics to the Advanced
Get a Grip on Your Ministry!*

Tuesday, August 6, 2002

First Baptist Church, Canton, MS

7:00 p.m.

Free Will Contribution

Tuesday, August 13, 2002

First Baptist Church, Canton, MS

7:00 p.m.

Free Will Contribution

**No Cost for this Event
But Reservations are Required!**

This workshop is designed for the Discipleship Training director, the Sunday School director, pastor, minister of education, and associational missions director to learn more about the importance of the Discipleship and Sunday School ministries.

Participants will learn the principles of visionary leadership, along with specifics on how to plan and implement an effective Discipleship and Sunday School ministry in your church.

A meal will be served at no charge. The workshop will follow.

Reservations are required by July 29.

Sunday School Department or Discipleship and Family Ministry Department,
PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205, 1 (800) 748-1651 or
(601) 968-3800 locally. Fax: (601) 714-7430

You may register online at www.mbcb.org on the
Sunday School Department home page.

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Sunday School Department and the
Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and
LifeWay Christian Resources

Pray this day for...

July 12-25, 2002

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"He who prays as he ought, will endeavor to live as he prays."

John Owens

During summer vacation months, many Korean Christians are eager to share their faith through ministry trips to nearby Asian countries. Pray for these volunteers who plan to work in 10 different locations this summer with missionaries who are already on the scene, serving among unreached people groups.

God has opened doors for journeyman Brent Turner to work in five or six elementary schools in the Mombasa area of Kenya. Many of the students are from Muslim or non-Christian backgrounds. Pray that God will give Brent wisdom and direction in developing ministries that would reach these students for Christ.

For: (1) GA Camp, Garaywa, 15-19; (2) Super Summer, Mississippi College, Clinton, 15-19 (D&FM); (3) Royal Ambassador/Challenger Camp, Central Hills, Kosciusko, 15-19 (MM).

For: (1) GA Camp, Garaywa, 22-26 (WMU); (2) Royal Ambassador/Challenger Camp, Central Hills, Kosciusko 22-26 (MM); (3) Young Musicians' Camp, Blue Mountain College, 22-26, (CM); (4) Malawians are good at evangelism, but fall short in discipleship. Pray that leaders can be trained to disciple other believers in Malawi.

Praise God that all of the 34 Chinese house church leaders who were kidnaped in late April by the Eastern Lightning cult have now been released! Please continue to pray for them as they rebuild their lives and resume their ministries.

Pray that the economic crisis in the country of Venezuela will improve. Almost all public universities are shut down because of the lack of funding, making it difficult to minister on campus.

For: (1) Mississippi Baptist Youth Night, Mississippi Coliseum, Jackson, 6:30-8:30 p.m., (Evan); (2) Lad/Dad Weekend Camp, Central Hills, Kosciusko, 3 pm, 19-noon, 20 (MM); (3) Pray today for Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia (eastern Africa).

Prayers were answered as wells in two Fulbe villages have been deepened. Many Fulbe travel miles every day to find water and bring it back to their village. The Fulbe Jeeri team are praying that helping provide more water will open doors to witness to the Fulbe people.

For: (1) Centri-Kid, Gulfshore, 18-20 (SS & LCR/SBC); (2) Pray for the staff of Sanyati Baptist Hospital, as they are in the process of choosing a hospital chaplain. Pray that those involved will have discernment and wisdom as they make this selection.

For: (1) Growing Churches, Gulfshore, 25-27 (D&FM); (2) Church Media Library Conference, Gulfshore, 25-27 (CS); (3) Pray for a local high school group that has started meeting every Friday night in Chile. There have been around 40 students participating, and many are being challenged to seek after Christ for the first time.

Ken Welborn, director of the Christian Ministries to the United Nations Community in New York City says, "We have the opportunity to minister to 189 countries as we meet ambassadors and diplomats in their local offices." Pray that good contacts will develop with all 189 UN member nations, and that opportunities to share the gospel will occur within each one.

Please pray for the Holy Spirit to give Franklin Graham the words that will touch the hearts of listeners in his 2002 Festivals at Spokane, Washington, August 23-25 and in Mendoza, Argentina, November 14-16. Also pray for Billy Graham's 2002 Mission, October 17-20 in Dallas/Ft Worth, Tex.

For: (1)II Centrifuge, Gulfshore, 13-18 (LCR/SBC); (2) Praise God for calling M., a young lady from the New Life Baptist Church in El Torno, Bolivia, to join Him in His work among the Guarayos! Ask God to provide a place for her to live in Urubicha as she supports herself as a seamstress and beautician.

20 For: (1)III Centrifuge, Gulfshore, 20-25 (LCR/SBC); (2) Pray for the many families in Jiangxi, China, who continue to suffer from the effects of abortions. Jiangxi women had 130,500 abortions in 2000; (3) Pray today for Prime Minister Mart Laar of Estonia (west of Russia).



PRESCHOOL/CHILDREN'S LEADERSHIP FESTIVAL

November 15 & 16, 2002
Main Street Baptist Church, Hattiesburg

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For: All preschool and children's teachers and leaders in Sunday School, Discipleship, Missions, and Christian Education

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For more information:

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or in Jackson, (601) 968-3800.

Don Hicks in Discipleship and Family Ministry
Robin Keels in WMU
Linda Reeves in Sunday School

HOUSE TOPS

JUST FOR THE RECORD

RAs of Broadmoor Church, Madison, held their racer night on May 15 and 22. Pictured are 1st-3rd place winners in 1st-5th grade and overall. Pictured (from left, front row) are Thomas Lister, Kyle Croftwell, Chandler Milstead; (middle row) Daniel Lang, Casey Rippy, Austin McQuirk; (back row) Cassidy Lloyd, Mason Wilbanks, Hardin Crowder, Wesley Dodd, and Rob White. Not pictured are Lawson Varner, Payton Wood, Jackson Jacobs, and Andoni Fino.



RAs of Broadmoor Church, Madison

Conference in Birmingham, Ala. Those attending, (pictured, from left) were Jeannie Means, Vicki Adcox, Becky Arender, Evelyn Hutson, Edna Purvis, Kim Anderson, Susan Easterling, and Cynthia Stuart.



Ground Breaking Committee of Friendship East Church

Groundbreaking services were recently held at **Friendship East Church, Charleston**, for a new auditorium. Pictured (from left) are J.G. Thomas, pastor;



WMU of Lynn Ray Road Church

Truman Scarborough; Zella Raney; Kenneth Rowe; Jamie Anderson; Johnny Lindley; Raymond Radcliff; David Carlisle; and Marie Carlisle.

Gospel singing featuring Glen Floyd and New Life will be held

at 7 p.m. on July 15 at **Mission Hill Church, Wesson**. Tommy Purvis is pastor.

WMU members of Lynn Ray Road Church, Lebanon Association, have doubled both their Lottie Moon Offering goal and their Annie Armstrong Offering goal. They used the program, See What Change Can Do, and two Sundays collected change in gallon jugs after the regular offering was taken. Helen Walters is WMU director.

Eight women from **Rock Bluff Church, Morton**, recently attended the Women of Faith



Women of Rock Bluff Church, Morton

ATTENTION PASTORS!

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Monday, July 22nd and Tuesday, July 23rd, from 9:30 AM to 9 PM, consultants from LifeWay Church Resources and the Mississippi Baptist Convention Family Ministry Department will be at the Jackson LifeWay Christian Store for **FREE** discipleship ministry consultations.

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1. Lord, I admit that I need you. *(I have sinned.)*
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. *(I repent.)*
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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N.J. suit filed by homosexuals

WASHINGTON (BP) — Two years after Vermont began allowing homosexual civil unions, the legal tug-of-war continues between homosexual groups seeking public validation of their domestic arrangements and conservative groups seeking to preserve the traditional concept of marriage. The latest struggle is taking place in New Jersey, where a legal defense group representing seven homosexual couples has filed a lawsuit against the state, demanding "marriage equality," CNSNews.com reported July 8.

If victorious, the legal complaint would make New Jersey the first state to allow civil marriages between two people of the same sex — a step farther than the one taken in Vermont where homosexuals have been able to obtain civil unions but not marriages since July 1, 2000.

One other state, Massachusetts, has a same-sex marriage lawsuit pending, while same-sex couples in Montana and New York are suing for the benefits of marriage.

Conservative groups like the Alliance for Marriage are defending the traditional legal status of marriage.

"Gays and lesbians have a right to live as they choose," said Matt Daniels, executive director of the alliance, "but they don't have a right to redefine marriage for our entire society."

Carey Dinner Theatre will present the Gothic melodrama, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, by Charles Ludlam, July 9-20, in the O. L. Quave Theatre on the Hattiesburg campus of William Carey College. *Vep* is a penny dreadful, a comic musical mystery that spoofs horror and mystery movies of the '30's and '40's. The melodrama will be presented nightly except Sundays and Mondays. Dinner is served at 7 p.m. with the performance following. The box

office is open 10 a.m.-7 p.m. daily except Sunday, and seats may be reserved by calling (601) 318-6221. Admission is \$20 per ticket.

Members of the Baptist Student Union area committee, Jackson County Association, recently broke ground for a new center located at the Jackson County campus of Gulf Coast Community College. Construction is expected to begin late summer.



BSU area committee of Jackson County

VBS NEWS

First Church, Fulton, recently completed their Vacation Bible School with 147 children enrolled and an average attendance of 131. They recorded 26 professions of faith and gave an offering of \$1,258, which was designated to buy playground equipment for their day care ministry. Parent's Night was held June 23 and an additional offering of

\$2,748 was given toward the playground equipment, bringing a total of \$4,006 for the week. Tommy Winders is pastor.

A special Vacation Bible School was recently held at Rock Bluff Church, Morton. It has been 24 years since the church last had Vacation Bible School. There were 34 children enrolled

in the program. Donnie Stuart is pastor and Cynthia Stuart served as director.

Vacation Bible School was held June 17-21 at Temple Church, Myrtle, with an enrollment of 115 children and workers.



VBS participants of Temple Church, Myrtle

Corinth, Purvis: July 15-19; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; commencement on July 21 at 6 p.m.; David Strebeck, pastor; directors are Rhonda Draughn and Melissa Yawn; for more information contact (601) 794-2185; pre-registration day will be July 13, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Pilgrims Rest, Batesville: July 15-19, 6-8 p.m., Wes Sherman, pastor.

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EVOLUTION A FARCE

Editor:

Many scientists have come to a point in their work where evolution simply no longer makes sense, yet they can not accept belief in intelligent design alone without aid from the theory of evolution.

When faced with the facts of science it seems impossible to come to any other conclusion. Consider these facts:

- Law of Biogenesis: Emergence of life from non-life has never been observed. This is so conclusive that it is called a Law, not theory.

- Mutations: When these show up in a child they are never beneficial and are sometimes deadly. Technically these are birth defects.

Doctors never say, "Congratulations, your child is a little different (evolved) from others; she has MS."

- Distinct types: Some species show no relation to others. The duckbill platypus is warm-blooded and weans its young like a mammal, yet lives in water like a reptile.

It has a ventral (abdominal) opening and lays eggs. It can detect electric current in water like a fish. It has a bill like a duck.

It has webbed forefeet like an otter, a flat tail like a beaver, and the male can inject poisonous venom like a viper.

More facts from science can be listed that prove evolution to be a farce. As a creationist, I am forced to view science through the lens of Scripture.

That view can never get me past Jesus' words in John 5:46, "For if you believed in Moses you would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me."

Clay Anthony, pastor
Richmond Church
Tupelo

VOLS NEEDED

Editor:

Please let our churches know about opportunities to do North American and international missions right here in Mississippi. We currently have a cancellation in Jackson County for the week of July 28-Aug 2 (assist a church in evening VBS). There are opportunities for a variety of projects during the week. Included are Backyard Bible Clubs at apartment complexes and in Boys and Girls Club settings. Additional opportunities include serving at seamen's centers, assisted living center, and a local soup kitchen.

Dormitory-style, air conditioned lodging which has showers, stove, refrigerator, washing machine, and dryer are available. The time is crucial and I feel this is just what someone is looking for to complement their summer program.

Thomas D. Miller
Jackson Association
Pascagoula

REUNION PLANNED

Editor:

The Mississippi Baptist Hospital/Gilfoyl School of Nursing Alumni Association is planning a reunion to be held in Jackson on August 2-3. The board of directors of the alumni association would like to urge all alumni to make contact with the association so that we can have an up-to-date alumni record. Some of the alumni are not presently on the mailing list and did not receive the information sent out by the association. These alumni are urged to send in their present address (including maiden name and/or married name and year graduated) to Joan W. Pipken, Secretary/Treasurer, MBH-GSN

Alumni Association, 106 Pine Ridge Road, Florence, MS 39073.
Margaret Webb Clingan
Jackson

GREAT TEMPTATION

Editor:

Thanks for your right-on-target editorial (June 20) concerning Jerry Vines' comments about the prophet Mohammed at the Pastor's Conference prior to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in St. Louis. William James once said, "The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook." The safety of missionaries and other Christ-loving people in Arab territories is more important than an applause line at the annual pastor's conference. These difficult and dangerous times call for thoughtful leadership. We need challenging and inspiring messages, but not at the risk of inciting violence. It seems that grandstanding in front of the home crowd is too great a temptation at the pulpit of the Pastor's Conference and the SBC.

Carl White, pastor
Highland Church
Meridian

EXCELLENT EDITORIAL

Editor:

Your editorial, Dangerous words, for what purpose?, was excellent! You were tactful with your wording but clearly got the message across. We must pray that Jerry Vines's statements do not hamper the missions work to the lost world.

Jerry Meredith
Greenville

ARE DOORS OPEN?

Editor:

Concerning William H. Perkins Jr.'s editorial entitled, Dangerous Words, for what purpose?, Perkins asked this question of Jerry Vines. Perkins did so because he thought that Vines' following remarks were unnecessary: "We follow a virgin born risen Savior not a demon-possessed pedophile." Can I ask a question? If I make a statement about retired Roman Catholic priest Paul Shanley being a rapist, will it be a risk to my

chances of reaching Catholics to Christ? I do not think so. I think that any Catholic who does not have blind faith in the Catholic Church would understand that I am not condemning all Catholics. Those who have blind faith in the Church will never be reached. The reason they will not be reached would not be because of my statement. They would not be reached because of their own delusion.

Back to Vines' statement. I would like to suggest an answer to the question asked by Perkins. The purpose of the statement was, to illustrate the difference between our Savior and the monster who founded Islam. The second purpose that the statement accomplished was to inform people of the real and true character of Islam and its founder. Were the words of Vines dangerous? Perkins implies that Vines' "inflammatory words" will not allow the doors for missionary work to continue in Muslim countries. Are they open now? If they are opened, were they opened because we did not tell the truth about what we know about Islam?

Willard Crawley, pastor
Twin Lakes Church
Walls

STAND ON TRUTH

Editor:

I would like to reply to the editor's remarks on what Jerry Vines said about Mohammed. Vines may have felt that Baptists need a clarification on the truth about Islam, as opposed to the nonsense that has come from the media and so many religious leaders. Jesus said that he did not come to bring peace, but a sword (Matt. 10:34-42). It is time for Christians to take a stand on the truth, and guess what, that is not always popular. Thank God real men of faith in the past took a stand that was both controversial and attacked (Martin Luther, Tyndale, etc.) instead of this wishy-washy Christianity that is put forth by men such as the Baptist Record editor. This is just another symptom of the anemic condition of Mississippi Baptists.

Robert Herrin, pastor
First Church, DeLisle



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC sought by church averaging 110 in Sunday School. Please e-mail resume to mwsjgb@vicksburg.com or fax to (601) 636-7574 or mail to Calvary Baptist Church, 2878 Old Hwy. 27, Vicksburg, MS 39180.

BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC/YOUTH: Hebron Baptist Church is looking for a bi-vocational minister of music/youth. Please send resume to: Hebron Baptist Church, 16 Hebron Church Road, Soso, MS 39480.

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NORTHWEST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is seeking a God-called man, seminary trained, to serve in the ministry of Program Development and Education for our association. All interested individuals need to address their inquiries to Rev. John L. Perkins, Association Missions Director, P.O. Box 381, Hernando, MS 38632.

HIGH HILL BAPTIST CHURCH, 10021 Road 206, Philadelphia, Miss., 39350, is seeking a bi-vocational minister of music for Sunday morning and night

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BRIAR HILL BAPTIST CHURCH, Florence, MS, is seeking a God-called man for pastor. If you feel that God may be leading you, please contact the church office at (601) 845-6843, and we will send you a summary description of the church, after which you may submit a resume if you feel led to consider this place of service.

MINISTER OF STUDENTS NEEDED with some musical background preferred. Full-time position. Send resume to: North Winona Baptist Church, 602 Alberta Drive, Winona, MS 38967 or fax to (662) 283-5004.

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

God wants me to be faithful

Genesis 6:5-9,12-14,22; 7:1-3,5; 8:1; Hebrews 11:7

By Ruth V. Gamble

Faithfulness, the seventh Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23, adds a delicious new flavor to fruit already described. The word conveys a sense of trust and confidence.

We identify someone who is faithful as one who keeps his or her word, or honors a commitment over a long period of time, regardless of personal difficulties or adverse conditions. In the New Testament passage from Galatians, the Greek noun *pistis* is related to the verb *pisteuo* and implies fidelity, faithfulness, or loyalty.

In our Christian worldview we understand that God empowers his people to be faithful in all life's circumstances and relationships. Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary says that faithfulness is God's nature,

demonstrated by his dependability, trustworthiness, and stability. Because God can never be unfaithful, we know we can depend on him to make us people of integrity, developing these godlike qualities in our lives.

The Fruit of Faithfulness seems to add a greater spiritual dimension to the previously-named Fruit of Perseverance. Our ultimate reward is to hear God say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant... Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25:121).

The secular worldview considers faithfulness as relative—something to be desired only as long as the results are beneficial to the individual's personal wants and interests.

The primary consideration is, "What's in it for me?" This view



Gamble

is often characterized by cynicism and mistrust of people, governments, and institutions.

A wonderful Old Testament example of faithfulness is Noah. Scripture tells us he "was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God" (Genesis 6:9).

This personal relationship is undoubtedly why God shared with him his plans to "wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth." He had seen "how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time," and the earth was filled with violence.

Specific sins are not named. We are only told that God was "grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain" (Genesis 6:6). The Hebrew word translated "grieved" ("repented" in the KJV) is the word *nacham*. It does not mean God made a mistake in his creation or admitted error.

God does not make mistakes, but he was greatly saddened at the wickedness of his highest creation, Man. Neither are we told why Noah was righteous in a society immersed in depravity and wickedness. Hebrews 11:7 says that Noah became "heir of the righteousness that comes by faith." His righteousness was due to faithfulness and came from obeying God even under very difficult conditions. We may well say that Noah was "faith-full."

God's plan to save Noah's immediate family and certain animals (for reproduction, food, and sacrifice at a later time) caused him to say, "Make yourself an ark of cypresswood. . . I am going to send a flood on earth to destroy every living thing" (Genesis 6:17). Then in considerable detail God gave instructions for building the ark. Noah was now over 500 years old. Was he surprised? doubtful? stunned? Had he ever even experienced "rain?" (See Genesis 2:5-6). We are simply told that "Noah did everything as God commanded." Some Bible students believe

that building the ark may have taken over 100 years. We may be sure that Noah endured years of ridicule, taunts, jeers, and harassment from his neighbors who probably dubbed his work "Noah's Folly!" Yet he faithfully continued.

Second Peter 2:5 calls Noah "a preacher of righteousness" suggesting that he preached during all the years of construction, warning the people of coming judgment, but without success. Again we are told that Noah did all that God commanded. Now that's faith!

True to his promise, God sent the flood. Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives, along with all the animals which God specified, found safety in the ark. God in his fidelity rewarded Noah for his faithfulness, honoring his promise both for protection of the obedient, and the destruction of the unrepentant wicked. May we be as faithful in our obedience to God as Noah was!

Gamble is a member of Slayden Church, Holly Springs.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Sexual Abuse

2 Samuel 13:1-39

By Bart Walker

It is possible that in the last few months you have become familiar with the term "dirty bomb." What is so insidious about this type of device is that the poisonous radiation spread by the bomb is far more dangerous than the initial impact of the bomb's explosion! It is thought that while the impact of the initial explosion would only last a few seconds at most, the impact (fallout) of the radioactive material could last for years, even decades!

Our lesson today is the record in God's Word of something like a "dirty bomb" in the life of David and his family. We begin to see the fallout from adultery, murder, cover-up, and ensuing judgment of God upon David's family.

We recall that Nathan prophesied "the sword would never depart" from David's house (2

Sam. 12:10) and that God would "raise up evil against" David and his house. God now allows the actions of David's life to bring correlating consequences. The condition of David's household begins to become noticeably distraught. The first revelation of the unraveling of David's reign and family is given to us in the obsession of Amnon with his half-sister, Tamar. It appears that Amnon has developed an obsessive love that is unreturned and which turns to frustration as his lustful desire to have the love (or at least the attention) of Tamar grows uncontrolled into such a fixation that he becomes physically ill.

The result is a bedroom plot that innocently involves King David, the household servants, and Tamar. He plans to play sick, have David send Tamar to look after him, send all the ser-



Walker

vants away, and then use force to fulfill his demented fantasy.

With Tamar lured into the bedroom, he grasps her and pleads with her to "lie with" him. The text of verses 10-14 reveal several truths about sexual abuse that should remain in our minds as we wrestle with the flood of exploitation of the weak through sex in our country:

• **The hidden element.**

Amnon orchestrated this event in the bedroom and then sent away the servants so that he could be alone with her.

• **The element of trust.**

Amnon was not suspected of this kind of behavior because he was the half-brother, trusted enough for David to send Tamar to him to take care of him.

• **The element of violation.**

Tamar was clear in her plea. This assault would violate her, making profane that which is sacred and dirtying that which is pure.

• **The element of moral law.**

Tamar was clear that this act would be disgraceful when she

said, "such a thing is not done in Israel". God has provided society with clear principles in command and conscience that such overpowering of the weak for sexual pleasure is wrong.

• **The element of reproach.**

Tamar's words, "how could I get rid of my reproach," tell not only of the matter of reputation, but of shame. Victims of sexual abuse report that this is one of the largest challenges to overcoming their past. The sense of shame seems to hound, pursue and torment the victims.

• **The element of exposure.**

Tamar lets Amnon know that that he will be one of the fools of Israel when this becomes known. Perpetrators of sexual abuse are among the least respected citizens in a godly society, and will go to great lengths to cover their sin with threats, further abuse, even taking the life of those abused.

• **The element of force.**

Amnon exerts power over the weaker Tamar, in the same way all sexual abusers do. Physical, mental, and emotional power are used to manipulate the objects of warped desires.

We can end with three further facts about this instance of

abuse and what it led to:

• **Hatred.** When so-called love crosses the line into abuse, the perpetrator realizes that all hope of love is then lost and the unreturned love is now hatred.

• **Inaction.** When sexual abuse is revealed in families, the result is so embarrassing that the general reaction tends to be inaction.

• **Revenge.** The consequences are the vengeful actions of Absalom on behalf of his sister.

As believers, we need to be aware of the presence of sexual abuse in our society. If we study the seven elements given above, we can be a part of the possible prevention of it in our own homes, churches, and societies. Take a moment now to pray for those who have found themselves on Tamar's end of abuse, that they may find in Jesus Christ the healing and hope he has promised to be for them. Pray they find the wonderful words of Jesus found in Matt. 11:28. "Come unto Me all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Walker is pastor of Parkway Church, Natchez.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



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Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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Artists to appear on TruthQuest

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Bebo Norman, Sarah Sadler, and the Paul Colman Trio (pc3) will make guest appearances on FamilyNet's new Christian reality series TruthQuest: California. The artists are represented by the Nashville-based Essential Records label.

TruthQuest: California is FamilyNet Television's twist on reality TV, differing from previous reality fare as 12 Christian teenagers take a journey to California to apply their faith in the real world. For 18 days in July, the TruthQuesters will write stories about and participate in cutting-edge ministry in the state.

Their stories will appear on Baptist Press, and their adventures will be chronicled in 13 half-hour episodes by FamilyNet Television to air weekly beginning Oct. 3. The TruthQuest: California team will learn to surf with Christian surfers in San Diego, attend a church on the beach, meet Christian celebrities, rappel with missionaries in Yosemite National Park, and interact with locals in the Haight-Ashbury District of San Francisco.

Katie Royals, a member of First Church, Jackson, was selected for the TruthQuest team. The team's web site is <http://truthquest.sbc.net>.

Bibliocipher

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ZBST ULSTSP ZBSAE

XTPSEMZDTPATC, ZBDZ

ZBSQ JACBZ

XTPSEMZDTP ZBS

MNEALZXESM.

IXHS ZOSTZQ-VUXE:

VUEZQ-VARS

Clue: Z=T

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Acts One Seven

Miss. churches receive Lifeway LINKies

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — A pair of Mississippi churches are among five churches and two associations that have been awarded the first annual LINKie Award for interactive excellence.

Presented by LifeWay-LINK.com, a provider of church Web site development tools and hosting associated with LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in Nashville, the awards recognize outstanding use of Web sites for ministry.

The recipients of the LINKie Awards excel in online areas such as community outreach, congregational communications, and innovative technology, said Tim Vineyard, vice president of the Technology Division at LifeWay. The 2002 LINKie Award recipients include:

- Emmanuel Church of Starkville (www.emmanuelmsu.com)

- Long Hollow Church of Hendersonville, Tenn. (www.longhollow.com)

- First Church of Tenaha, Texas (www.fbctenaha.com)

- First Church of Pelham, Ala. (www.fbcpelham.com)

- Haltom Road Church of Ft. Worth, Texas (www.haltom-roadbaptist.org)

- Long Run Association of Louisville, Ky. (www.longrun-baptist.org)

- Birmingham Association of Birmingham, Ala. (www.bbbsbc.com)

Also recognized for unique innovations or various elements of interactive excellence

were the 2002 LINKie honorable mentions, which included:

- Horizon Community Church, Jackson (www.horizoncommunity.com)

- First Church of Russell, Ky. (www.fbcrossell.com)

- Mt. Zion Church of Jonesboro, Ga. (www.mzbc.org)

- The Summit Church of Durham, N.C. (www.homessteadheights.net)

- Temple Church of Ruston, La. (www.temple-ruston.org)

- First Church of Kennesaw, Ga. (www.kfbc.org)

- North Highlands Student Ministry of Hueytown, Ala. (www.nhbccrosstraining.net)

- Genesis Church of Hereford, Texas (www.genesis-church.com)

- First Church Moss Bluff of Lake Charles, La. (www.fbc-mossbluff.org)

- First Church of Lilburn, Ga. (www.firstbaptist.net)

"People increasingly are turning to the Internet for spiritual information, and churches large and small are responding with some very effective ways to meet these needs," Vineyard said. "We established the LINKie Awards in coordination with our LifeWayLINK ministry to applaud great examples of how to use the Internet for the Kingdom."

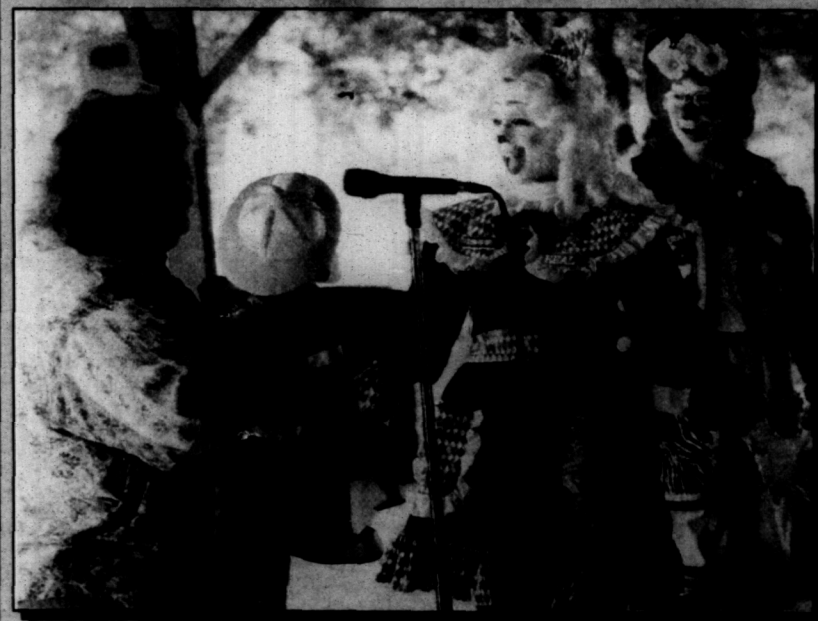
Featuring hundreds of Web site designs, LifeWayLINK helps churches and associations create and maintain professional Web sites simply, he added.

Web sites are available to SBC churches for free. More advanced LifeWayLINK sites also are available for monthly

fees or at an annual discount. In addition, associations are entitled to a free Web site for a year. More information and the sign-up process can be found at www.lifewaylink.com.

Nominations for the 2003 LINKie Awards will begin in September 2002. More information and nomination forms may be obtained at the LifeWayLINK Web site, www.lifewaylink.com.

International Family Festival held in Starkville



The annual International Family Festival, held June 8 on the campus of Mississippi State University (MSU) in Starkville, attracted 160 people from 11 countries for entertainment ranging from a Korean singing group to a Taekwondo self-defense demonstration. Performing for the festival were (from left) Jan Halford, minister of youth, senior adults, and education at Calvary Church, Jackson, and her puppet Sparky talking with Buttercup (Lisa Shook) and Lilly Mae Perdicker (Connie Adams). Shook and Adams are members of Fellowship Church, Starkville. The evangelistic event was sponsored by Golden Triangle Association in Columbus, the MSU Baptist Student Union, and the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The International Family Festival is a ministry of the Mississippi Cooperative Program. (BR photo by Tim Nicholas)

West Coast Baptists criticize judge's pledge ruling

LA PUENTE, Calif. (BP) — Pastors and lay leaders throughout the western United States expressed dismay at the June 26 ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court that public school recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance was unconstitutional.

"Appalling" and "wake-up call" were the words used by several to express their concern for the court's stance on the words "under God" used since 1954 in the pledge.

"I am appalled and concerned about this ruling," said E.W. McCall Sr., pastor of St. Stephen Missionary Baptist Church in this eastern Los Angeles suburb and second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Christians in the U.S. by and large have abdicated to secular society's perspective on life, and rulings like *Roe v. Wade* and this one by the Ninth Circuit Court are the result, he said.

"Those of us who understand who God is must rise up in this issue," McCall said. "We need to pray for our nation and we need to speak up and be heard. We must take the platform back."

The ninth circuit court covers the largest area of the feder-

al court system's 11 regional circuits. It includes the states of California, Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Hawaii, Alaska, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

Members at Tammany View Church, Lewiston, Idaho, discussed the ruling during their Wednesday evening service.

"The real question is not whether our country gets all fired up about words in a pledge," Pastor Tim Palmer said. "The real question is do we understand what it means to be one nation under God. This ruling is an opportunity for us as Christians to demonstrate that not only by what we say in our pledges but by the way we live our lives that we live 'under God.'"

Tammany View members then spent time in prayer for people in the United States to come back to God and to recognize the only way to be under God and in his favor is through Christ, Palmer added.

Don Reeves is pastor of Grant Avenue Church in Corvallis, Ore. He talked about the wake-up call to Christians the Ninth Court's ruling could be.

"We have come to a point in our country where we have absolutely and totally forgotten our history and where we have come from," Reeves said. "We have warped our history intentionally, and [deleted the fact] that God had an integral part in our nation from its inception. The Ninth Circuit Court has underscored that warped history for everyone."

"Maybe this will be a wake-up call," Reeves said, echoing the words of several other pastors in the West contacted by Baptist Press about the ruling. "I hope it will wake us up, to show people how far we have come."

Christianity was begun in an "anything goes" era when people were not conducive to accepting God," Reeves said.

"The church can survive in an anti-God world just fine, but our nation needs to understand that's where we're headed," said the former president of the Northwest Baptist Convention. "We've gone that way — pretty much knowingly gone that way."

We've taken deliberate steps as a country to walk that direction, perhaps not knowing the consequences, but I don't think we as Christians can get so

hyper about that that we forget God is God no matter what anybody says," Reeves said.

"We need to live our faith, number one, and number two, to be involved in the political and judicial process. And for that matter, be more involved in life in general," he added, including putting youngsters in public schools rather than separating them into Christian schools.

Kevin White, pastor of First Church in Longview, Wash., is current president of the Northwest Baptist Convention.

"This ruling is an attack on Christian values and principles and American traditions," White said. "We were established as a Christian nation under God."

"What I told my church last night was that I don't know what God has in store for America in this but he has some plan so we need to just trust him with it and respond properly."

"I wonder if God has allowed this to happen because for years we haven't acted as a nation under God and we haven't really trusted him as we say on our money," White added.